



**MINISTRY OF TOURISM  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Speech by Deputy Minister Tokozile Xasa at the Local Government  
Tourism Conference Workshop for media, GCIS, Pretoria**

**29 March 2017**

Programme Director,  
Deputy Directors-General,  
Department Spokesperson,  
Ladies and gentlemen of the media,

Allow me to express my gratitude for addressing you members of the media today about a crucial event the Department of Tourism is hosting; the Local Government Tourism Conference taking place from 3 to 4 April 2017 at Emperors Palace.

This national conference, themed; “Tourism planning is everybody’s business”, will bring together some five hundred delegates and I am excited as it is the responsibility of all of us to develop tourism.

Frankly speaking, tourism can only succeed when it is a priority at all three levels of government. Tourism should not be in a separate plan, but should be incorporated in all provincial and municipal growth and development strategies. Then only will we build a strong and thriving sector which will grow the economy and create jobs. This conference will greatly assist municipalities with integrated planning and we are excited about the workshops we will provide to assist delegates with it.

Tourism is one of South Africa’s biggest success stories since the dawn of democracy and it continues to grow while providing a livelihood for many households. This sector currently supports about 1.5 million jobs directly and indirectly in South Africa. There is still however more space for growth especially at the level of municipalities. When municipalities get their tourism planning right, it will also greatly assist them to attain many of their developmental outcomes.

As a key driver of the country’s economy, tourism has the potential to turnaround the wellbeing of ordinary South Africans by stimulating equitable participation into mainstream tourism initiatives.

I strongly believe if the 2017 Local Government Tourism Conference is a success, it will give local government the push it needs to go from strength to strength.

This conference is also taking place at a significant time as the 2017 theme adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly was the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. All our efforts are focussed on ensuring we create sustainable tourism development for inclusive economic growth in South Africa. Inclusive growth is the only logical path as we continue to march unwaveringly towards pursuing the reduction poverty and inequality.

Colleagues will also be aware of the Presidential Local Government Summit which takes place 6 and 7 April, on the heels of the Local Government Tourism Conference.

The Presidential Local Government Summit will at its core, look at ways to bring local government back to the people and thus promoting economic growth while strengthening local governance.

We would be failing in our duty as government, if we also do not ensure that as we seek to include society in the tourism mainstream that the most vulnerable members of our societies are also brought along on this journey of growth.

In line with the ideals of the National Development Plan, young people and women should be especially empowered to ensure that they also benefit fully from the gains of our hard-won freedom.

Lastly, I would like to urge you esteemed members of the fourth estate to report on the Local Government Tourism Conference to ensure its success. This is an important event which will empower many municipalities to plan better when it comes to tourism. When we get that right, this sector can truly flourish and change the lives of many South Africans.

I thank you.

**ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM**